

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawing depicting Figs. 5 and 6 replaces the original sheet depicting those figures.

FIG. 5 – reference numeral – 71A – has been inserted

FIG. 6 – reference numeral "78" has been changed to –90 –

statement in the French language has been deleted.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet (Figs. 5, 6)

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is requested.

It is requested that Form PTO 892 be corrected to add Knorr-Bremse patent (British 1,397,372) which was incorrectly identified as a U.S. Patent in section no. 4 of the Official action.

Claim 1 is directed to an inflation circuit which includes a valve disposed in a supply line between a reception chamber (e.g., a tire), and a fluid source. A calibrated leak device is provided which can form a calibrated leak of compressed fluid from the supply line. The valve is a springless non-return valve 71A which includes a free differential valve 71, an example of which free-distribution valve 71 is disclosed in connection with Fig. 5, wherein a free floating stopper 73 is movable between open and closed positions in response to a fluid pressure differential between a supply line side of the stopper and a reception chamber side of the stopper. The stopper is biased to the open position when the pressure at the supply line side exceeds the pressure at the reception chamber side to enable fluid to flow between the supply line side and the reception chamber side, wherein the stopper is permitted to close gradually by the calibrated leakage. That enables a limited amount of fluid to flow from the reception chamber side to the supply line side after communication if the compressed fluid source and the supply line is blocked.

That valving 71, 71A is now described in greater detail in claim 1 which stands rejected over Battocchio (WO 94/13499) in view of Knorr-Bremse and Pugh et al. and also as unpatentable over Battocchio in view of Borilicault.

None of the references discloses an inflation circuit having the presently claimed springless valve in a supply line.

Battocchio which corresponds to U.S. Patent 5,674,332, discloses an inflation circuit which includes non-return valves VA-VD disposed in a supply line between respective reception chambers and a fluid source. However, those valves are not springless as presently claimed. In that regard, at column 3, lines 10-20 of the U.S. equivalent patent, Battocchio discloses that the valves VA-VD are of a complex type disclosed in French Patent 884,598 mentioned in the present background (copy enclosed) which, as can be seen from the figures, requires a spring for its operation.

In the present invention defined by claim 1, an inflation circuit is provided with a springless non-return valve which includes a free differential valve for enabling inflation/deflation of a tire. There is no spring to obstruct pressure differences as discussed at page 17, first full paragraph of the specification.

Likewise, the Boulicault patent discloses a valve in an inflation/deflation system, but the valve is relatively complex and requires a spring 28 for its operation.

For the above reasons, it is submitted that claim 1 distinguishes patentably over the prior art applied in sections 4 and 5 of the Official action.

Independent claim 17 is directed to an inflation circuit which includes a loss of head device in the form of an adjustable choke, e.g., an adjustable screw 78 (see Fig. 2 and pg 17, first full paragraph). Neither Battocchio nor Boulicault discloses a loss of head device in the form of an adjustable choke as recited in claim 17, or in the form of a perforated screw as recited in new claim 48. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 17 is allowable.

Independent claim 31 recites, inter alia, that the non-return valve is mounted in a wheel hub and includes a movable element movable along the axis of the wheel, a structure not disclosed by Battocchio or Boulicault. In such an arrangement, the

movable element (e.g., the stopper 73 of Fig. 5) is not subjected to any centrifugal force as noted on page 18, lines 7-10 of the specification. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 31 is allowable.

The specification has been amended to provide antecedent basis for language now used in the claims, and the drawings have been amended accordingly, and to change "78" to – 90 – in Fig. 6.

In light of the foregoing, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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